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**In the claims:**

All of the claims standing for examination are reproduced below.

1. (Currently amended) Method of determining the oxygen demand, total oxygen demand [[TOD]] (TOD) or chemical oxygen demand [[COD]] (COD), of an aqueous solution, ~~in particular of waste water, in particular for a purification process, comprising the steps of:~~

(a) providing an elongated and substantially vertically oriented reaction chamber;  
and

(b) decomposing wherein a sample of the aqueous solution is decomposed by combustion, characterized in that the combustion is carried out without the presence of a catalyst in an elongated and substantially vertically oriented an upper region of the reaction chamber, to the upper region of which the aqueous solution is conducted, at a temperature above 1150°C, in particular of at least 1200°C.

2. (Currently amended) ~~Method according to Claim~~ The method of claim 1, wherein after combustion characterized in that salts contained in the sample are removed at the lower end of the reaction chamber.